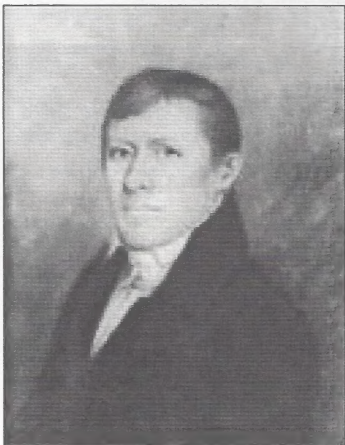




Riverview

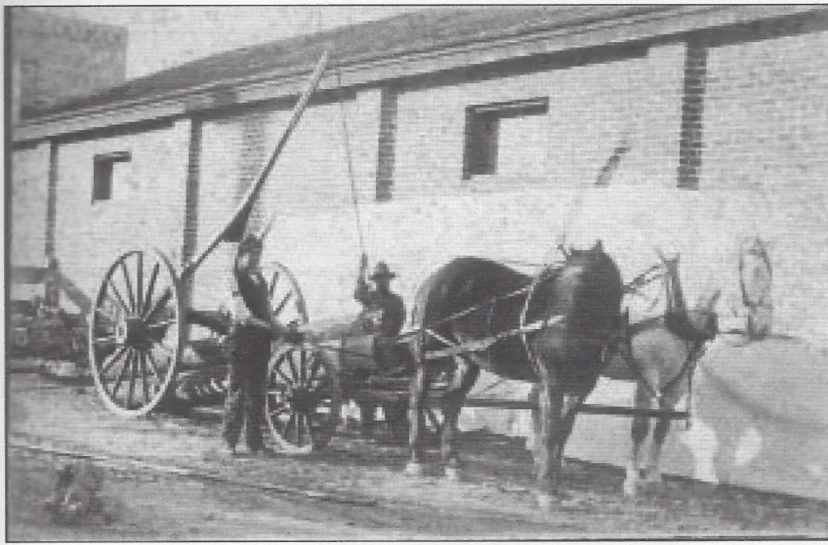
It's out of the way. There are only two ways in and it is possible to live in Suffolk or come through Suffolk regularly without knowing it exists. The Riverview neighborhood, however, is too beautiful to be missed.

Apparently Benjamin Dumville came to Suffolk from New York immediately after the Civil War to serve as Postmaster of the town. In December of 1866, he and his wife Sarah purchased the large piece of land to the west of the old wharf. The land fronted on Smith's Creek and the Nansemond River. Before 1818 the area had been called "Athens" as the farm of Jeremiah Godwin, Jr., and Josiah Riddick called it "Waterloo" when he owned it 1818-1849. (See note on page 2.) An 1877 map of Suffolk calls the area Dumville Farm. Today we know it as Riverview.



Mr. and Mrs. Jeremiah Godwin, Jr., of "Athens"

Dumville built his farmhouse (or modernized an earlier one) on a rise between the river and a pond. Nansemond Pointe Rehabilitation and Healthcare Center is now on the former site of one of the old Dumville homes. A portion of Dumville Lane, which once ran to the farm, can be seen from Church Street. At low tide, remnants of what might have been Dumville's wharf can be seen on the river below Nansemond Pointe today. He later built a house on the crest of the hill on present day Western Avenue.



Logging equipment manufactured by J. M. Butler on South Main Street

The Riverview Land and Investment Company was formed around 1890 by two prominent citizens of Suffolk. J. M. Butler, president of the land company, was engaged in the family buggy and wagon business that had started just after the War. By the time the first houses were built in Riverview in the 1920's, the buggy business was over and the Butlers were making horse-drawn logging equipment. R. L. Brewer, Jr., another officer in the company, owned a jewelry store that had been started by his father. Like his father, the younger Brewer engaged in public service throughout his life. During the 1920's he was Speaker of the House of Delegates. The company bought the Dumville Farm in 1890. The price was \$13,800 for 110 acres of land and ten shares of stock. It was in the Holy Neck voting district at the time of purchase but was soon added to the Town of Suffolk.

A well-known 1907 Bird's Eye View of Suffolk (available at the Train Station gift shop) shows many streets

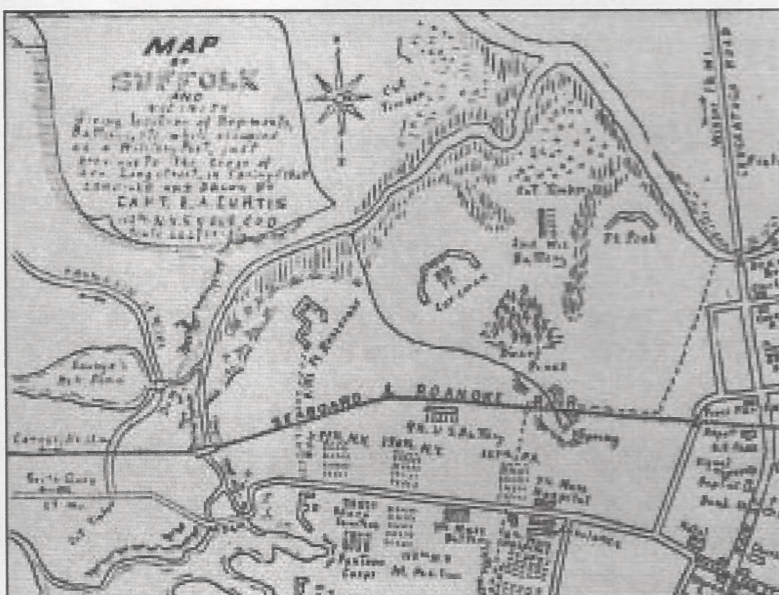
laid out on the former farmland but no development had occurred. It was far away for people accustomed to walking everywhere. It would be necessary to own a car to live there. The 1907 view shows that other street names were changed over time—Fern, Boush and Dell Streets, for example, were renamed over the years.

Many modern day Suffolkians who grew up in Riverview recall playing in the woods, the ravines and the old Civil War forts before so many of the present residences were built. Many of those same people chose to live in Riverview as adults and several houses have known three or more generations of the same family.

Until Hurricane Isobel, many of the earliest homes stood under massive old trees that must have stood sentinel through most of the last century. The old trees made good shelter for azaleas, camellias and boxwood that were planted in beautiful gardens. Most of the earliest houses were built along the river so they had river, creek and marsh views.

The view changed some in the late 1950's when the City of Portsmouth built a dam forming Lake Meade where Smith's Creek, Cohoon's Creek, and part of the river had been. This became part of Portsmouth's water system. By the 1960's most of the area had been developed. The last of the Riverview Land Company lots were sold in the early 1990's.

Note: 1973 map by Fillmore Norfleet in *Suffolk in Virginia c. 1795-1840*, provided early information about Riverview.



Portion of a map of Suffolk drawn by a Yankee during the Civil War

During the Union occupation of Suffolk in 1862 and 1863, Union troops constructed a ring of earthwork fortifications around the town of Suffolk to defend against attacks by Confederate forces. Their defensive line passed through what is now Riverview and included two large earthen forts. Fort Corcoran stood at the intersection of Fort Street and North Broad Street, with its cannons facing north. Fort Peck stood at the east end of Fort Street, overlooking the Nansemond River, with its cannons covering Providence Church Road (today's North Main Street) north of the Nansemond River bridge. At that time the woods in front of the forts had been cleared away so that each had a clear field of view. *Information thanks to Kermit Hobbs*

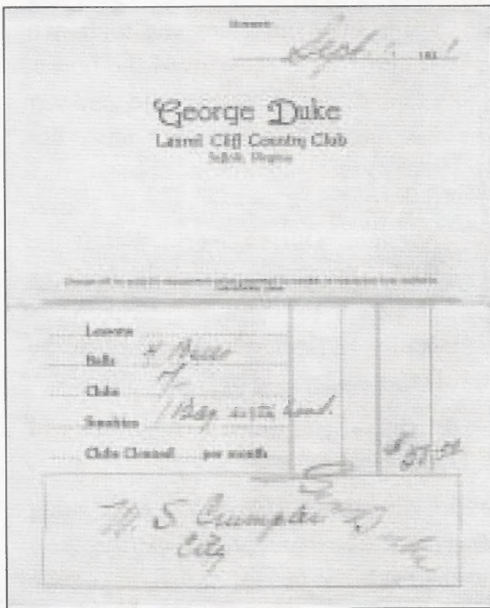
Laurel Cliff Country Club

There is an island in Lake Meade that is easily visible from the 800 block of Riverview Drive. There was once a country club there that predated the development of Riverview. Before the dam was built to form Lake Meade, the area was high ground where Cohoon's Creek joined Smith's Creek outside the northwest edge of town. The initial approach was from Pitchkettle Road. Eventually a bridge was built from the Riverview side.

The club was formed under the leadership of James Corbett, an outstanding young lawyer (who, by the way, built the beautiful house at 117 South Broad Street). R. E. Lee Taylor of Baltimore was chosen as architect and the well-known landscape designer, Charles Gillette of Richmond, was hired to plan the grounds (read about his life and work in *Genius in the Garden* by George C. Longest available at the Train Station). Gillette also designed the tennis courts. C. A. Neff of Norfolk designed the golf course.



Bridge from Riverview to Laurel Cliff Country Club



1921 bill from the golf pro at Laurel Cliff Country Club

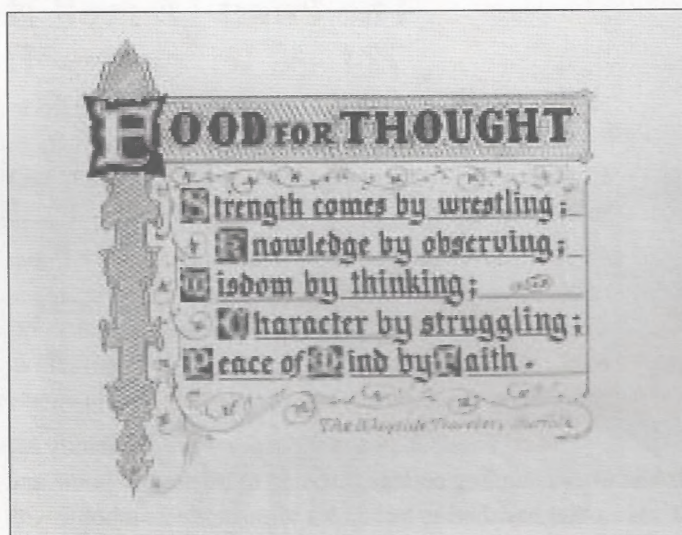
The clubhouse

was completed in 1920. The officers and charter members were James H. Corbett, president; J. L. Hume, vice-president; L. P. Holland, secretary. The board of directors consisted of H. Stuart Lewis, H. H. Holland, Henry L. Land, C. F. Taylor and J. T. Withers, as well as the officers named above.

By 1921 there were 100 members and a fulltime chef. There were dinners, dances and golf and tennis tournaments. But the decade of the Twenties brought many changes in social life and, with the automobile, so many entertainment options. One by one members dropped off the list. In 1927 the club was dissolved.

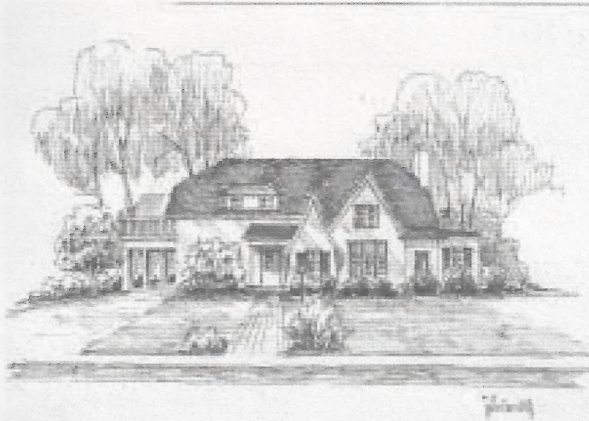
The golf course was eventually purchased by R. A. Harry who operated it as a public facility into the 1940's. Mr. Harry and his father lived in small shacks on the island until the dam was built. The Clubhouse was a private residence for a while. The clubhouse burned at some point; then the dam was built in the late 1950's, isolating the land.

Pieces of the bridge are still visible when water in Lake Meade is low. Nature has now reclaimed the land, obscuring the spot where Suffolians once enjoyed pleasant times at Laurel Cliff.



R. A. Harry, calling himself *The Wayside Traveler*, used a small hand-operated printing press at his home on the island to create items such as these to distribute to shut-ins. The booklet on the right shows the bridge to the island. Pictures thanks to Lee Hart.





The Butler-Harrell House 407 W. Riverview Drive

In the late 1920's people in town started buying lots out in Riverview. One of the purchasers was Beulah Eley. The lot she bought was on Western Avenue at the time of purchase but that portion of the street was soon considered part of Riverview Drive. Her husband, Hatcher Eley, was a builder and/or brick mason.

It is thought that he erected the small, quaint English style cottage on the lot. Apparently the Eleys never lived there but rented the house to others to use while their own homes were being built.

The house found new owners in 1938 when it was bought by the Butler family. Frank Butler, Jr., was a descendant of J. M. Butler and was president of the Farmers Bank of Nansemond. He and his wife Arnold Prince Butler would soon made additions

to the cottage to provide more living space for themselves and their two young sons. They loved the house. Frank Butler became an avid gardener like many other Riverview men. For many years there were no houses across the street on either side of Butler Avenue. During World War II the Butler family's victory garden was planted on the vacant lots. The Butler family had many happy years at the house at the head of Butler Avenue.



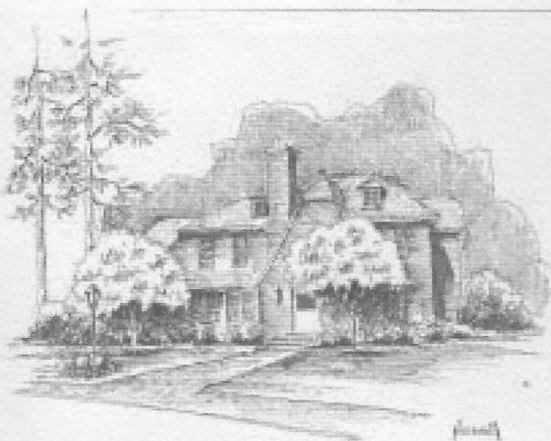
Above is a rare picture of the second and third buildings for Farmers Bank before the beautiful columned building on the left was demolished. The first building actually constructed for bank use was on this site. The building on the right is now SunTrust Bank. Frank Butler, Jr. was president of the bank. Photos thanks to Prince Butler.



Mrs. Butler in her backyard

In 1976 the house was bought by Monette and Bobby Harrell. The Harrells reared their two daughters here. Some young adults will remember attending preschool in the little yellow schoolhouse that Mrs. Harrell created in the Butler's old garage.

In 2003 Hurricane Isobel delivered a terrible blow to Suffolk, especially to Riverview, with hundreds of huge old trees being uprooted. One of the hardest hits was taken by the Butler-Harrell house with twelve trees falling on it. The house proved its sturdiness but the schoolhouse was gone and azaleas and camellias lost their canopy of trees. The Harrells made the best of it, making a large addition to the rear of the house where the trees and the schoolhouse once stood.

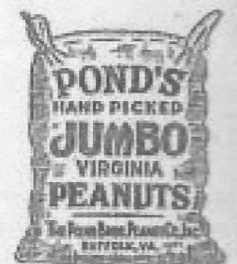


The Pond-Harrell House 721 W. Riverview Drive

Wayland Thomas Pond, Sr., was born and raised in Southampton County. He came to Suffolk in 1915 when he and his brothers purchased the Pope Peanut Company, soon to be reorganized as Pond Brothers Peanut Company, Inc. Suffolk was the peanut capital in those days and the Pond family prospered.

In 1926 Pond purchased a lot some distance from downtown in the new area called Riverview. Suffolk architect A. DuPre Breeden was commissioned to design a handsome Tudor style home for the Ponds' waterfront lot. Constructed of clinker brick, the house has an unusual varicolored random width shingle roof and several diamond pane casement windows.

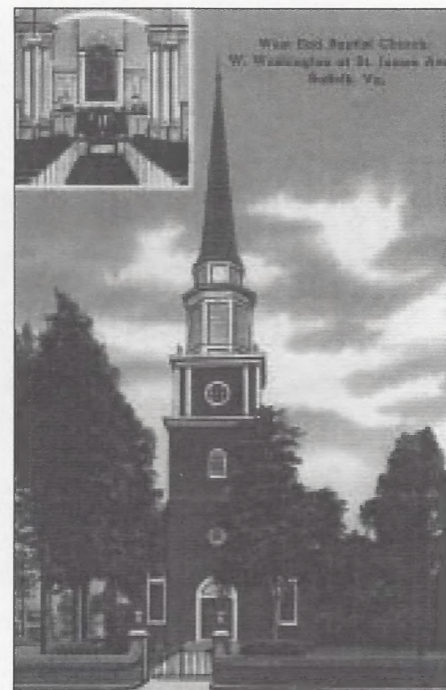
W. T. Pond, Jr., was a teenager when his family moved into the new house. He went to Suffolk schools and after attending college returned to the family home and the family business. By the time he married in 1940, his mother had died so he and his bride made their home with the elder Pond. Here they reared their four children, the oldest being Mary Lawrence. Like many men in Riverview, Mr. Pond was an avid gardener and a member of the Camellia Society. All the children grew up to love gardening like their father.



The next part of the story occurred in 1973. W. T. Pond, Jr., had died and his widow moved to a smaller house. Mary Lawrence and her husband, John Harrell, moved into the family home and there they reared their two children.

The Harrells added a new den and connecting gallery to the rear of the house Breeden designed but the addition did not alter the charm that was built into the original. Guests are treated to magnificent views of Lake Meade where Smith's Creek once flowed. Antiques and reproductions and family portraits furnish gracious, inviting rooms.

A. DuPre Breeden (1895-1970) was a Bennettsville, South Carolina, native who worked as an architect in Suffolk throughout his professional career. Not only did he design W. T. Pond's house, but he also designed West End Baptist Church, which counted W. T. Pond, Sr. and Jr., as well as many other Ponds, as charter members. Breeden also designed the Chadwick Theater, Birdsong Recreational Center, the Coca-Cola bottling plant, the Elks Lodge and many private residences in Suffolk.



Front of West End Baptist Church as shown in *Suffolk in Vintage Postcards*



The Whitfield-Walker House 710 North Broad Street

Thomas J. Whitfield, Jr., was born in Nansemond County and as a young adult worked with his father in his cotton gin and related businesses in the Kimberly section of Nansemond County just across the river from Suffolk. When the elder Whitfield died in the 1930's, the family businesses were sold. Young Tom Whitfield went to work for Godwin Motor Company and eventually bought the business from B. W. Godwin.

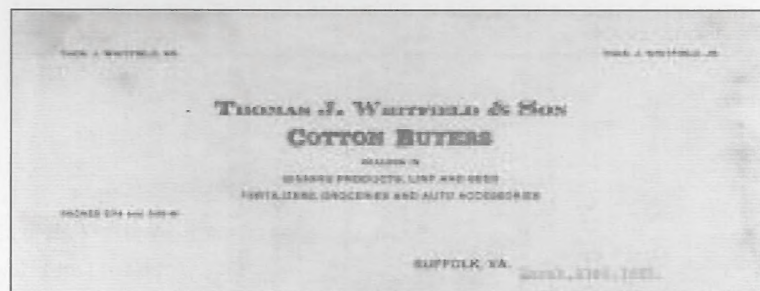
Meanwhile, Sue Jordan Gray in 1925 had purchased a lot on North Broad Street from the Riverview Land Company. We assume that it was a year or two later that she and her husband Fletcher Gray built their small house on the large lot. The house was a surprise in Riverview because out of all the early houses, this was the only clapboard one.

By 1939 the Grays had moved to Richmond and in June of that year Thomas J. Whitfield, Jr. bought the small house and moved his family to the country—Riverview. There were few neighbors and the streets were not paved. There was no Jones Street when they moved in though their lot went through the block to where that street would later be. The family kept chickens on the back garden and had a pony there until the children were teenagers. During World War II the area also accommodated a large Victory garden.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Whitfield, a frustrated architect, needed more space. Over the next two decades or so she planned and supervised three or four additions to the house. The larger and rather elegant living space that she created is a testament to her innate talent and good eye.

Over the years, Jones Street was opened for development. The back portion of the Whitfield property became a beautiful garden with an ornate gate opening on Jones Street. The Whitfield's three children grew up and moved away. When the Whitfields could no longer maintain the large garden, the lot was sold and now a new home facing Jones Street stands where the pony once grazed. Sometime after Tom Whitfield died in 1987, Pat King Whitfield decided to move to a smaller place. In 1993 she sold her beautiful house to Drs. Miley and Jean Shelton Walker who, with their four children, opened a new chapter in the story of the small house that grew so nicely.

The Walkers have furnished the house with antiques and fine reproductions. Of particular interest are the ox yoke and hoops from the covered wagon that carried Jean Walker's family from Virginia to Tennessee around 1800. Interesting and beautiful artwork is found throughout, some of which was created by one of the Walkers' daughters, now an artist in New York.



Letterhead from Thomas J. Whitfield & Son, Cotton Buyers

Excerpt from a special Suffolk News edition, October 1942

Thomas J. Whitfield, Jr., president of the Godwin Motor Company, Inc., was born in Suffolk, the son of Thomas J. and Annie Benton Whitfield. He attended Suffolk High School and received a business education. The elder Mr. Whitfield had come to Suffolk in 1875 and was one of the original cotton gin owners in this section. His gin was across from the present site of the State highway office. The gin burned in 1909 and was rebuilt that same year. He was also a well-known horticulturist and at his place, Whitfield's Hill, had over 4,000 fruit trees. He shipped peaches to New York, Baltimore and Washington markets.



The Shotton-Gersbach House 604 West Riverview Drive

When Charles Shotton's family moved into their new home on Riverview Drive in 1937, Charles was just two years old. He had plenty of open space for play as he grew up because his family owned the land on either side of their home and there was a field behind the house.

When World War II started, the family had room for a large victory garden. Even though he was still a child at the time, Charles remembers watching for aircraft and using the manual for spotters to identify the B-25's that Navy pilots flew low in the field behind the house just for fun.

Charles' father, Charles H. Shotton (1903-1990), a contractor, had built his family's home. It had a few unusual features for its time such as the two-car garage in a day when many families were still car-less. The basement was considered a necessity by the elder Shotton who had been reared in Pennsylvania. The big full-length windows were all that were available when he was ready to install them. The windows are now a major feature of the house and they overlook a cove across the street on Lake Meade.

The Shottons lived in the house for more than fifty years. Over the years the lots on either side were sold and houses were built there and in the field behind. In 1991 the Shotton family sold the house to the current owners, Mr. and Mrs. Marcus Gersbach, a young family who are avid collectors of period furniture and decorative arts. The Gersbachs are graciously opening their home for this year's tour.

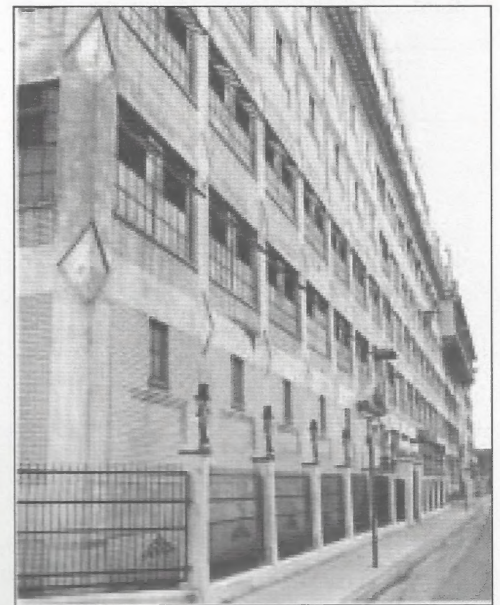
How the Shottons Came to Suffolk

Thomas Enos Shotton's employer, Amadeo Obici, had asked him to move his family south to help open his plant in Suffolk. Mr. Shotton, his wife Mary Lewis and his children moved south and eventually built the house at 528 Riverview Drive where he lived until his death.

Once here he wrote a friend, Carl Schadel in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, telling him that if he would come to Suffolk, he could be in charge of building the machinery for the new peanut processing plant that Amadeo Obici was planning to open. Schadel arrived riding a motorcycle, worked to build machinery in the plant and later went into the sheet metal business for himself, making Suffolk his home until he died.

Shotton was in charge of setting up the plant and getting it operational. He invented the peanut roaster still in operation in a downtown store. Later, when Mr. Obici decided to make his peanuts into candy, Shotton developed much of the machinery used in the candy making and peanut roasting process.

After Mr. Obici built his home at Baypoint Farm, he built Planter's Club nearby for the use of employees. Charles H. Shotton, son of Thomas Enos, built the club swimming pool, one of the first in-ground pools in Suffolk, and grandson Charles remembers going there often on Sunday afternoons to swim with Planter's employees and their children.



Planters Nut & Chocolate Company—main building, shown in 1960, which has since been demolished and replaced by a new factory building. Note the Mr. Peanut figures that stood sentinel in front.



The Quayle House 621 Butler Avenue

In 1948 two new homes were being built in Riverview by contractor J. R. Wills. One was the Pond residence at 404 West Riverview Drive and the other was Harold and Bernyce Quayle's charming and unusual—for the neighborhood—New England style house. The Quayle's house was finished first and the family moved in with their three children in 1948.

In his working years, Harold Quayle was involved in the lumber business, a business that was important to Suffolk's economy. At the time the house was built, he was operating a lumber mill that he owned in Williamston, North Carolina, and he commuted to his work. (See our August 2007 issue.) It is not surprising that this home was sided with wood instead of brick.

The family had a great deal of musical and artistic talent. The older Quayles created a boxwood garden under the tall pines that grew in their backyard. In later years, Bernyce Quayle made beautiful portrait collages and family members still enjoy baskets that she made. The boys sang and played the piano.

After many happy years together in their trim New England house under the Virginia pine trees, Harold and Bernyce Quayle died just a few months apart in 2000.

The house was vacant for a time until their son Fred Quayle and his wife Brenda came back to the family home in 2003. The house is now beautifully decorated in light, bright colors that complement the elder Mrs. Quayle's portrait of Queen Elizabeth I done in the



Harold and Bernyce Quayle shown at a party celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary. The picture behind them was taken on their wedding day.

1980's. Senator Fred Quayle's excellent artwork is also seen throughout the house. The patio and boxwood garden have given way to a porch that is used almost year round.



The Quayle house decorated for a Christmas past

The 1928 Knabe baby grand piano waits for the Quayle family to gather on Butler Avenue yet another Christmastime to make a joyful noise.

A footnote: Before the Quayles and the Frank Butlers moved to Riverview, they lived on either side of a duplex apartment house on Brewer Avenue. The Quayles' son Fred and the Butlers' son Frank, III, were born on the same day. The Butler-Harrell house is part of this year's tour, too.



The Pond-Ferguson House 404 West Riverview Drive

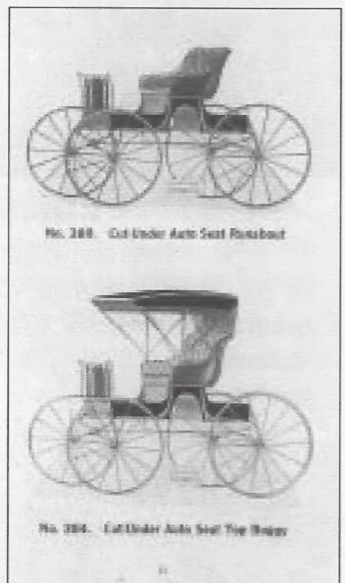
Richard Pond and his wife Margaret Parker were both from families who were in the peanut business in Suffolk. Their families had come from Southampton County, Virginia, and Hertford County, North Carolina, respectively, drawn by the business opportunities that awaited in fast-growing Suffolk in the early 20th Century. Mrs. Pond's family, the Parkers, first had a buggy and casket company in Suffolk but as the demand for buggies disappeared, they turned to peanuts.

When the couple decided to build a house in Riverview, they bought a lot across the street from the house of Richard's uncle W. T. Pond. The Ponds and their three children moved into their new home in 1949. They planted pine seedlings in the front. In the backyard Mr. Pond planted a large rose garden with which he carried on a friendly competition with his neighbor, Dr. James M. Habel, a few blocks away. A close friend, Dr. Habel was nationally known as a camellia hybridizer and was president of the American Camellia Society.

There were still few neighboring houses when the Ponds moved in and there were fields and woods aplenty on the old Dumville farm. There were remnants of Civil War forts at least for a few more years and the river was a wonderful place for all neighborhood children to play. There were always boats in the days before the dam was built. At home there were two dens and the living room had plenty of space for a piano and an organ. The children grew up here. They left for college, married and went their respective ways.

The Ponds sold the house in 1975. There have been several owners since then. The rose garden was replaced as a focal point by a swimming pool; the pine trees that the Ponds planted are now taller than the house.

The current owners, Mr. and Mrs. Grier Ferguson, have just moved in this year. As we write, renovations are being made to tailor the house to their needs. Their newly enlarged kitchen will be the site of this year's Sugar Plum Kitchen. Refreshments will be available here as well. With the sounds of heavenly harp music thanks to Mary Margaret Jones, this stop is the place to nourish body and spirit.



Page from 1918 catalog of Parker Manufacturing Company



Preparation of site for construction of Pond house. Thanks to Richard L. Pond, Jr.



The Sugar Plum Kitchen 724 West Riverview Drive

Come to the Sugar Plum Kitchen each day during the Candlelight Tour to purchase homemade pies, cookies, cakes and fudge, etc. These items are attractively packaged for use as gifts. Or buy your own Christmas goodies here. Let us be your holiday bakers! This year's Sugar Plum Kitchen is in the newly enlarged and renovated kitchen in the Pond-Ferguson House.

Postscript to our May 2007 issue



Jamestown Exposition 1907

R. W. Withers (of the Riddick-Withers family of Riddick's Folly) is shown here with his guests, probably at the Virginia House. The ladies are as follows: (standing) Mary Judith Smith, unknown, Laura Etheridge, Susie Hitch, Cornelia Summerville, Gertrude McIlroy, (seated) Baby Hitch, Janet Withers (Darden), Nell Jordan. *Picture courtesy Riddick's Folly*



Correction from our August 2007 issue

The Suffolk Literary Club was founded in 1894.



Jeff Pond in backyard of Pond-Ferguson house, taken soon after the family moved to their new home in 1949. Tour guests will see considerable changes in this view.

Visit Riddick's Folly

Riddick's Folly on North Main Street will be open tour days (Saturday 10-4 and Sunday 1-5) with a special exhibit about the Riddick family, including pieces of family silver that were recently donated to the museum.

Left: Kiwanians Frank E. Howell, Webb Pinner, W. B. Harrell, Jr. and H. Burdge Caton watch as workmen from Greenbrier Farms prepare to unload and plant the "Living Christmas Tree," a 20-foot Cedus Deodora, on the north lawn of Main Street Methodist church in December 1951. This tree has since been replaced by a smaller one.

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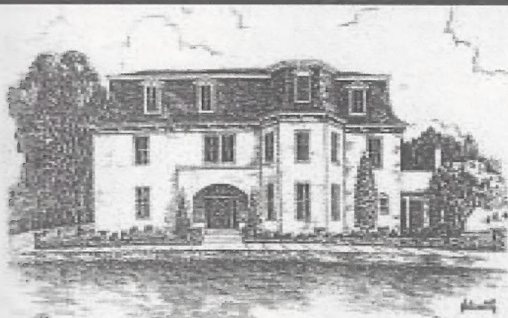
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In memory of Judy Wilson Brinkley from Tom and Sue Woodward

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Do your Christmas shopping at the Train Station!

Visit our gift shop for these and many other items:

Maps - 1887 Corps of engineers color map of southeastern Virginia and northeastern North Carolina showing railroads

- Civil War map of Suffolk (portion shown on p. 2, this issue)

- 1930 color map of tourist spots in Tidewater, also showing railroads and shipping routes

Copeland Spoon-Pewter replica of a spoon found at Jamestown in the 1930's, original made in Chuckatuck in 1675—available in 3 sizes

Books - Railroad, Civil War, gardening, cooking, local history and a great assortment of children's train books



On tour weekend, **Riddick's Folly**, 510 N. Main St., an 1837 Greek Revival building, will be open to our guests on Saturday 10-4, and Sunday 1-5. Visit their gift shop. On Sunday, 1-3, meet Jim Melchor and Tom Newbern who will sign copies of their book *Classical Norfolk Furniture 1810-1840*. Look for Norfolk furniture at Riddick's Folly and in tour homes.

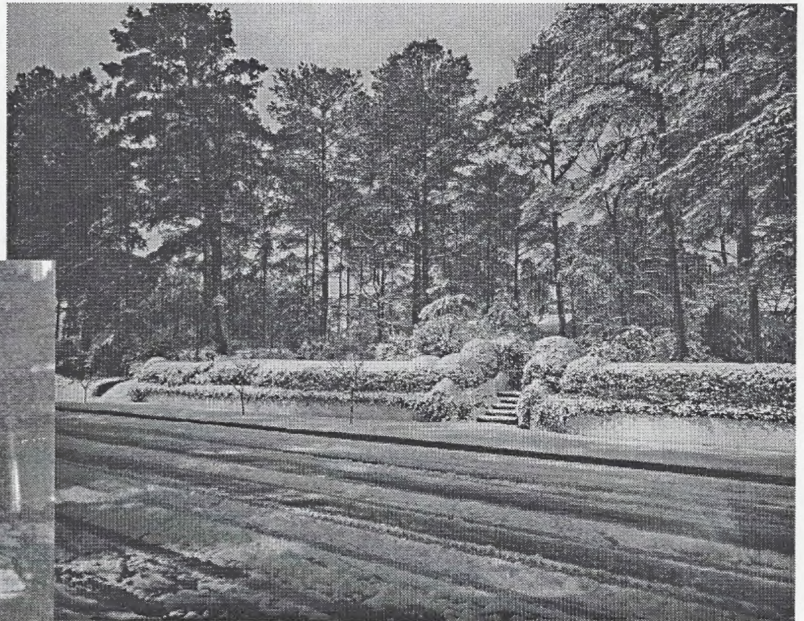
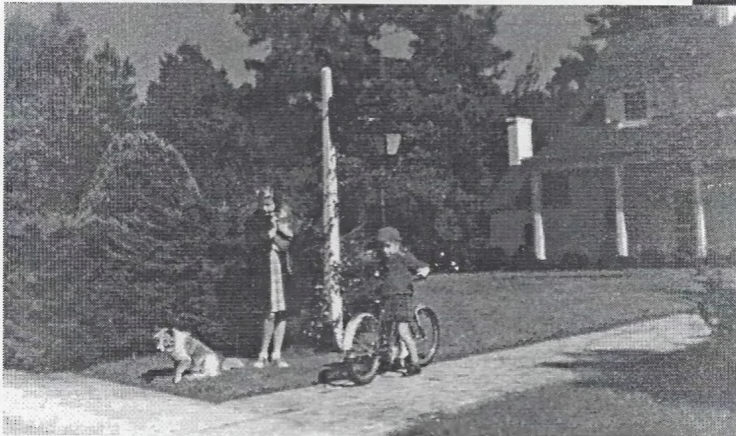


Congratulations to:

- Marcus Pollard with **Commonwealth Preservation Group** who was presented the Award of Excellence for the Montgomery Lofts in the old Montgomery Ward Building in the 100 block of N. Main Street. The award was given by the Virginia Downtown Development Association.
- **Suffolk Center for Cultural Arts** which was given First Honor Award by the International Interior Designers for maintaining historic elements of the old school when it was converted to a community arts center.

The Whitfield-Walker House

We were glad to receive these photos of the Whitfield-Walker House from Ann Claudia Whitfield. *Right-back* gate of the garden on Jones Street as it once was. *Below-Diane and Ann Whitfield in front of their house c. 1950.* This picture shows a porch (now gone) across the front of a much smaller house.



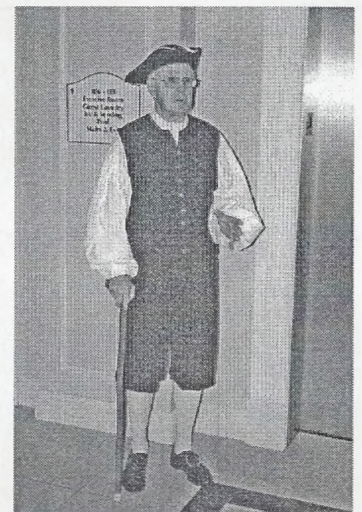
Correction—The Whitfields had four children.

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SNHS was happy to be part of the Norfleet Family Heritage Tour weekend in October. Family members came from several states and Brazil. The group above poses on the land where Thomas Norfleet settled in 1666. This is on the Nansemond River near Nansemond River Golf Course.

Norfleet Family Heritage Tour — October 12-14, 2007



Dr. Ben Norfleet, one of the organizers of the event, is dressed as Christopher Norfleet of 1671.

A few more things . . .

Tour Specials! — Make a night of it!

Show your tour ticket and enjoy a 15% discount on a delicious Saturday night dinner or Sunday breakfast/lunch at **Pisces Restaurant**, 115 N. Main Street. Call 923-9740 for reservations.

Enjoy a special tour discount at the **Hilton Garden Inn** by making a reservation by **November 23**. Call 757-925-1300 for reservations. The Hilton has recently received an Award of Merit for design from the Hampton Roads Association for Commercial Real Estate. Congratulations!



The Chair as Art

Take home a usable piece of art by Marcy Miller of Uniquely Leo's. SNHS will raffle a chair painted in the style of the display pieces at Marcy's shop at 165 North Main. Brighten your corner of the world and enjoy extra seating. (Thanks to Sid Thomas for ensuring that it is usable art.)

Purchase tickets for \$5 each at Shooting Star Gallery, 118 North Main; Riddick's Folly; and the Train Station. Drawing to be held Monday, December 3rd. Winner will be notified.

Remember the *Sugar Plum Kitchen*—Yum!



Pine Needle Basket Demonstration & Sale at the Train Station, 326 N. Main St. Sunday, December 2, 1-4:00 p.m. only

For about 200 years forest products were an important part of Suffolk's economy. When railroads became the leading means of transportation, lumber moved on the rails.

Artist-craftsman Teddi Forsyth lives near Roper, North Carolina, a town founded on the lumber business. Appropriately her work involves a forest medium—long leaf pine needles—which she uses to craft beautiful unusual baskets.

She has taken first place in numerous juried shows and her work has been widely exhibited, including at the Peninsula Fine Art Center and the Museum of the Albemarle. One of her baskets currently graces the office of North Carolina Governor Mike Easley.



Give a gift membership for Christmas. We'll mail notification to recipient or to you to present it. Members receive 4 publications per year and notification of special events.

SUFFOLK-NANSEMOND HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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There is history in all our lives.

The Last of the River Rats

This photo was taken around 1956, just a few years before the dam was constructed to create Lake Meade. Gordon Parker (L) was visiting Lee Hart (R) on this raft that Lee built with the help of his uncle Edgar Simpson. The raft was docked under the bridge that went to the island where Laurel Cliff stood. Though it had a 5 horse Johnson motor and an old Ford steering wheel, the raft provided many hours of fun without going anywhere. Smith's Creek and Cohoon's Creek at the head of the Nansemond River were very popular playgrounds for Riverview boys. Note the vertical line securing the boat in the foreground to the bridge above.



SUFFOLK NANSEMOND



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Butler-Harrell house in the 1950's